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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 19 August 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and on behalf of the European Union, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons". The item should be allocated to the First Committee.

An explanatory memorandum is annexed to the present letter, in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Detlev GRAF ZU RANTZAU

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

The European Union suggests the inclusion of the item entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons" in the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, opened for signature in January 1993 and in the meantime signed by 157 States, has not yet attracted a sufficient number of ratifications to ensure its entry into force. The earliest possible date for entry into force two years after opening for signature will consequently be missed. A discussion of this item within the framework of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly at this stage could contribute to raising the awareness of States with regard to this historic achievement in arms control and disarmament and thereby help to encourage national ratification procedures.

At the same time the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session could give a fresh impetus to the ongoing work of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in order to ensure the early conclusion of its tasks, aimed at the effective and full implementation of the chemical weapons Convention at the time when the Convention enters into force.

With regard to verification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, many efforts have been made over the last years, particularly during the process in the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/65 of 16 December 1993, noted with satisfaction that the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts had completed its work on 24 September 1993. According to the provisions of the Group's mandate and pursuant to the request of a majority of States parties to the Convention, a Conference of States parties will be convened at Geneva from 19 to 30 September 1994. It appears appropriate for the General Assembly to consider the outcome of this important Conference immediately after its conclusion.